

people to petition the government is hardly a solution to this much more serious and pervasive problem.

If we are inclined to improve conditions we should give serious consideration to the following policy reforms, reforms the American people who cherish liberty would enthusiastically support. Let us have no more No Child Left Behind legislation. Let us have no more prescription drugs programs. No more undeclared wars. No more nation building. No more acting as the world policeman. No more deficits. No more excessive spending everywhere. No more political and partisan resolutions designed to embarrass those who may well have legitimate and honest disagreements with current policy. No inferences that disagreeing with policy is unpatriotic or disloyal to the country. No more pretense of budget reforms while ignoring off-budget spending in the ever-growing 14 appropriations bills.

Cut funding for corporate welfare, foreign aid, international NGOs, defense contractors, the military industrial complex, and rich corporate farmers before cutting welfare for the poor at home. No more unconstitutional intrusions into the privacy of law-abiding American citizens. Reconsider the hysterical demands for security over liberty by curtailing the ever-expanding oppressive wars on drugs, tax violators and gun ownership.

Finally, why not try something novel like having Congress act as an independent and equal branch of government? Restore the principle of the separation of powers so that we can perform our duty to provide checks and balances on an executive branch and an accommodating judiciary that spies on Americans, glorifies the welfare state, fights undeclared wars, and enormously increases the national debt.

Congress was not meant to be a rubber stamp. It is time for a new direction.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CONAWAY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to come and address the U.S. House of Representatives. I want to thank Democratic Leader NANCY PELOSI and our Democratic Whip, Mr. STENY HOYER, and also our chairman, Mr. JAMES CLYBURN, and I think it is also Mr. LARSON who is our vice chair, and the rest of the ranking members and other members of the Democratic Caucus.

Mr. Speaker, an hour ago we were talking about the issues of fiscal responsibility. We were talking about trying to make sure that the American taxpayer gets what they deserve out of this government, this government that they have elected to come to Washington, D.C., to represent them, to

make sure that they get the biggest bang for their tax dollar.

I think it is important to point out, Mr. Speaker, that we are having some real financial issues right now. Some may say on the majority side, and I do respect the members on the majority side, and I know that there are a few members on the majority side that feel the way we feel here on the minority side, on the Democratic side of the aisle, that we have to get our fiscal house in order. And we are not there yet. I can say here boldly and honestly that we are not there.

There are a number of third-party validators that are talking about the fiscal irresponsibility on the majority side and by this President that has put this country in financial jeopardy. You have individuals saying we want to cut the deficit in half, but, meanwhile, back at the ranch, they want to borrow from countries like China. They want to borrow from countries like Saudi Arabia and give those countries a piece of the American pie, Mr. Speaker.

I think it is important that in the last hour, when we talked about innovation, we talked about putting America first. We talked about not cutting student loans to everyday Americans. We talked about assisting that next generation and the generations that we expect to be able to stand up and make this and continue to make this country free and put us ahead as it relates to inventions, as it relates to innovation.

We are talking about on this side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, that we embrace and we appreciate our troops and our veterans. But, meanwhile, in the President's budget, it talks about cuts in veterans affairs. It talks about higher co-payments for veterans.

I must say, Mr. Speaker, I am a Democrat, but guess what? I represent Republicans, Independents, green party, and Democrats back in my district; and they feel the way that I do.

I have not had one constituent say, Congressman, I want you to go to Washington, D.C., and make sure that you borrow as much money as possible so that I can pay it back with interest. Congressman, I want you to go to Washington, D.C., and be irresponsible with my tax dollars and make sure that we do not have accountability as it relates to unbid contracts. Congressman, I want you to look the other way when it comes down to making sure that you have the proper oversight so that we do not have this culture of corruption, cronyism and incompetence that we are seeing on the majority side and in the White House right now.

I think it is very, very important, Mr. Speaker, the perception that the American people and the reality that they are seeing right now. This is not the Kendrick Meek or the 30-Something or the Tim Ryan report. This is what is being printed every day in the papers.

It is not that the Congress is taking a bold step to make sure that the children of America have what they need;

making sure that we have the kinds of innovation that the President spoke about, Mr. Speaker; making sure that the veterans do not have to pay a higher co-payment for health insurance that we promised them as a country.

We salute one flag right now, Mr. Speaker, not because of coincidence. Because individuals have died for that opportunity. We have individuals that have served and served in many theaters to make sure that we can salute one flag, and the bottom line is we should not turn our backs on those individuals.

What Mr. RYAN and I are going to talk about in this 30-Something hour is the tax on corruption, the corruption tax that the American people have to pay and the American children have to pay, and men and women that have worn a uniform have to pay.

Guess what? It is not just Democrats. It is not just Republicans. It is not just independents. It is the American people. It is not just the folks that vote. It is not just the folks that do not vote. It is not the folks who are seeking status that have green cards in this country that are legally here. It is happening right now.

Mr. Speaker and Mr. RYAN, I just want to say before I yield, I feel good about the fact that we were talking about the K Street Project 2 years ago. Night after night, week after week, we talked about it. We were honest and upfront with the American people that something was fundamentally wrong when you have a K Street Project, talk about it, put a press release out about it, about how we have this relationship with the special interests.

What about a relationship with the American people, Mr. Speaker? So now we have a lobbyist here in this town that has admitted to guilt, Mr. RYAN, that has said, I have broken the law. We do not have to have a trial because the evidence is so strong. We do not have to have a jury pool. We do not have to have people come in and waste 6 months of their lives on a jury pool and a jury selection. I will admit to guilt.

Days after this particular lobbyist said, I am guilty, I am willing to help the government in seeking out those Members that were part of this.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I am closing in a minute, Mr. RYAN, because we have been talking about this. I admit to guilt, and I am willing to help the government. All of a sudden, all of a sudden, Mr. Speaker, the Republican majority says, you know, we are done. The K Street Project is no longer in existence. As a matter of fact, this little thing that we call K Street, what are you talking about? I do not know what you are talking about. We are just going to rip it up. It is not anything that we really care about. We are going to do away with that.

It is almost like, as I would say, Mr. RYAN, and as I will yield to you, the

game warden cannot be the lead poacher. I will say that to you right now. I think it is important that we be up front with the American people because they are paying a hard, strong corruption tax, Mr. RYAN.

□ 2230

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. You are exactly right, and it is that. It is the cost of the American people of the kind of corruption that is inherent in this system today as the Republicans run the House and the Senate and the White House.

Let me just say this so we are clear. After record profits had been earned by the oil industry, they received in the energy bill \$12 billion in corporate welfare, but nothing is done by this Congress to address lowering gas prices or home heating oil.

Now, Halliburton, the former company of Vice President CHENEY, got billions of dollars in no-bid contracts, and they have since been fined \$2 million for over charging the government and are suspected of costing the government \$1.4 billion. Halliburton has been fined for basically stealing the taxpayers' money.

The oil industry is getting \$12 billion in subsidies, and nothing is being done to lower Mom and Dad or Grandpa or Grandpa's gas cost, and the top Medicare administrator, Tom Scully, negotiated to get a lobbying job at the same time he was negotiating the Medicare prescription drug bill, which helped companies more than it helped senior citizens. You say corruption tax, and that is what I mean. Tit-for-tat, taxpayer pays for it. Corporate welfare to the oil industries, nothing to lower gas prices, citizens pay that corruption tax.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. This is reality. It is not something that you are making up. This is reality for individuals that may be hard core supporters of the majority; that is fine. I am a supporter of the American people. We are not here on behalf of party. We are here on behalf of the American people.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. There have been a few Members who I consider very good friends on the other side of the aisle who have over the past few weeks and few months have really come out and said we have got to get rid of the corporate welfare, we do have to make these changes, we do have to get rid of the things that are going on with the oil industry.

The problem is, is they are just a handful of those people, and the rest are putting the kibosh on the minority of the minority of the minority of the Republican party, just like they are doing to the Democrats.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. These will be the very Members that if the American people allow us to lead, that what you are talking about, would be a bad chapter in American history. Well, we can put this country on the right track that will partner with us in a bipartisan spirit, and all it takes, and you

know and I know, is a majority vote to make anything happen in this House.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Absolutely. Let us just look at one thing we have been talking about here.

One of the major costs of the kind of institutional corruption that is going on right now is what is going on with the interest on the debt. The Nation's debt is now over \$8 trillion with a T, and the interest in the 2007 President's budget, the interest alone is almost two-hundred-and-twenty-some billion dollars out of this budget. Now, when you look and you compare what we have to pay in interest on the debt compared to what we are paying for education or homeland security or veterans, it is totally and utterly disproportionate to the kind of investments we need to be making, because this money, and on the chart here, we are borrowing this money from the Japanese government. We are borrowing the money from the Chinese Government. We are borrowing the money from OPEC countries.

We are ceding our country away to these other foreign interests, and at the same time, we are asking Japan and China to borrow money because we do not have enough because we are giving out corporate subsidies to the oil companies and corporate welfare to the pharmaceutical companies. While we are doing that, we have to go and borrow the money from the Chinese government, and then we have to borrow it from the OPEC countries, and as we showed before earlier, an hour or so ago, the Chinese Government is taking this money, they are lending it to us, collecting the interest and investing that money in the training of engineers to the tune of 600,000 engineers that they are going to train next year while we are training 70.

That really is the bottom line, that these kind of decisions are leading and costing. They are leading to enormous problems for our country, and they are costing us a lot of money. They are really beginning, I think, to push the burden down on to the next generation. We cannot continue to sustain the kind of deficits that we are running. The next year or 2007 year's budget deficit is projected at over \$400 billion, \$400 billion, and that is unacceptable while we are giving the oil industry \$12 billion and \$16 billion to the energy industry, and we are giving to the tune of \$50, \$60, \$70 billion to the health care industry in subsidies.

It is a coincidence, or maybe it is not, that the oil industry's profits are going through the roof. So it begs the question, why are we subsidizing them? The energy companies, profits going up, subsidizing them, too. Pharmaceutical companies, profits through the roof, subsidize them, too. This is pay-to-play in Washington, D.C., and all the while, it is happening at the expense of average people. All this is happening at the cost of the American people.

There is a corruption tax. There is a K Street tax to average people who are

trying to do business, trying to make ends meet in middle America and all across the country, and they are having a very difficult time of it. They are paying the cost of K Street and the cost of the corruption that is going on.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. With interest I must add, and I will tell you that it is very, very unfortunate when we tell children who want free and reduced lunch that we cannot do what they need us to do.

I think also what is wrong is when we tell veterans that they have to pay higher copayments because we do not have the money to be able to assist them in their health care.

I think another thing that is wrong, when we tell individuals that pay taxes every day, that we cannot assist them as it relates to innovation and finding other opportunities to be able to find alternative fuel to fuel their vehicles or home.

I think it is also a travesty when we have no-bid contracts. Time after time again, reports are released here in Washington, D.C., on how we failed the American people domestically and how we failed the American people as it relates to their U.S. tax dollars overseas as its relates to the war. There are billions of dollars that are unaccounted for and that cannot be attached to what its purpose was supposed to be in Iraq.

This is not fiction. This is fact, and tomorrow night and I want to say this to the staff and make sure that the rest of the 30 Somethings hear, we want to talk a little bit about what happened to the other \$9 billion U.S. tax dollars in Iraq. We both serve on the Committee on Armed Services and I think it is important that the American people know. It is unacceptable, unacceptable for us to do or for the Republican majority to do what they have done as it relates to a lack of oversight.

I think it is important that we talk a little bit more about innovation and our plans to move America forward, but I want to make sure that the American people and the Republican side know, the Members on the other side of the aisle know, here is our plan right here. This is a summary of our plan. It is on the Web site, housedemocrats.gov, very simple. It is not a secret. It has been there for a long time. The only reason why it is there in the Web site, and the only reason why we have it in legislative bills, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that we cannot move innovation.

Let us talk about innovation for a minute because I want to make sure we do not fake anyone out and have folks confused. Innovation means we are committed to making sure this generation and future generations are ready to lead in the way that the past generation has done and this present generation are trying to do right now.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Can I say something? There has been this whole discussion over the last 10 or 15 years, and

it started with President Reagan's government, you know, government is the problem. I think it is fair to just on balance say that we understand government cannot solve all the problems nor should it, and we understand the private sector can solve a lot of these problems, but there are areas where the two need to work together. That is what we are talking about with The Innovation Agenda.

A lot of the recommendations that we have here are coming from CEOs, Republicans, who are saying this is what we do, and if you look at the history of the country, railroads, the space program, the interstate highway, National Institutes of Health research and development that has been going on for years and years, National Science Foundation, they are critical. Universities are government. They are publicly funded, publicly subsidized, and they are doing all kinds of research for all kinds of really good causes.

So we have a responsibility here, and our responsibility is to take the public's tax dollars here that they give us and spend it wisely and spend it in a way that there is accountability.

Now, \$9 billion lost in Iraq is not accountability. Borrowing from the Chinese and the OPEC countries and the Japanese governments to fund our deficits, that is not accountability. That is reckless fiscal policy, and it prevents us from investing in the kind of innovation that we want to invest into. That is the cost to the country of this nonsense that is going on down here, \$400 billion deficits, and we are spending \$16 billion in corporate welfare to subsidize the oil industry? \$400 billion projected deficit for 2007, and we give it in a giveaway to the pharmaceutical companies? That is irresponsible fiscal policy because we do not have the money to give them in the first place.

I will stand up here if we had the money and make the argument that we still should not give it to them, but we are borrowing money that we do not have to give to people that do not need it. That would be like giving Bill Gates a tax cut. We have given Bill Gates a tax cut, too. We are giving people money that we do not have and they do not need it, and it is coming at the expense of things and investment in technology, and innovation is a part of this.

I just want to read a couple of quotes because the 30 Somethings are all about the third party validator. There may be some people who say, well, there goes the Democrats, there goes the 30 Somethings, they are the on the floor, they do not have any solution. What are they talking about? This is a third party validator about our Innovation Agenda that Leader PELOSI came up with.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. This is good, third party validator outside of the political process. They do not carry a voting card here in the U.S. House. They are not a stakeholder. The only stake that they hold is having Ameri-

cans to be able to fill jobs that they want to provide.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. That is exactly right. John Chambers, president and CEO of Cisco Systems, Incorporated: "The Innovation Agenda focuses on the right issues for building on our Nation's competitiveness, from investing in basic R&D, expanding science and math education and broadband infrastructure, to creating a globally competitive business environment. This agenda thoughtfully addresses how government can best play a role in improving our economic competitiveness by focusing on innovation. I look forward to working with both sides of the aisle to implement these laudable goals."

□ 2245

That is the CEO of Cisco Systems.

And then we have the managing director of Federal Government Affairs for Microsoft saying, "At Microsoft Technology we are committed to changing the world through innovative technology; and in order to fulfill that commitment we need a pool of well-educated, skilled workers. We ask Congress to give these issues serious consideration and support."

We need a pool of skilled workers, American skilled workers, and we need to increase it. Our innovation agenda calls for 100,000 new scientists and engineers over the course of the next 4 years and putting broadband in every household in the country in the next 5 years. And we probably could do it quicker, but we have this tremendous trade deficit and budget deficit here in the United States that will not allow us to do it because of the reckless fiscal policies of the Republican Party that run the House, the Senate and the White House.

Mr. Speaker, this is what we are competing with. China is going to produce 600,000 engineers next year; India, 350,000 engineers next year; the United States of America, Mr. Speaker, 70,000 engineers next year. That is unacceptable.

And I recognize that they have larger populations than we do, but when we have many of our school districts that have 70 or 80 percent of the kids living in poverty, we are never going to be able to catch this number because we do not have enough players on the field. This is a broad approach that the Democratic Party has.

Our friends on the other side of the aisle, and many of them are very dear friends, they have been in charge of this House since 1994, and we have the highest budget deficits that we have ever had in the history of the country. They have had to pass a debt limit increase five times since President Bush has been in office.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. And they want to do it again.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. And they are going for number six.

We need to get the fiscal house in order and start making targeted in-

vestments in education and making sure that we have enough people to compete on a global economy. This is brutal competition that we are facing. I have an opportunity to spend 2 weeks in China in August, but the brutal competition that we must face in order to continue to lead the world because we cannot have a tier one military with a tier two economy. And you want to maintain your superiority in the world, you better have a tier one military, and if you want a tier one military, you better have a tier one economy. If you want to have a tier one economy, you better make the kind of investments that the Democratic Party wants to make in order to start evening out some of these numbers so we have job growth in the United States, so we are filling the need and filling that pool of well-educated, skilled workers that companies need.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, Mr. RYAN knows he had me at hello on all of that.

When he says Mr. MEEK, he is really talking to the Republican majority. I will say to my colleagues, because I want to be sure that they have good and accurate information from third-party validators, they can go to www.HouseDemocrats.gov/30something and you can get the charts, get what Mr. RYAN is talking about.

Most of these people that are third-party innovators as relates to innovation, they can care less who says that we brought innovation into the United States again, that we are investing in innovation. They just want it to happen. These individuals are Republicans, Independents and Democrats that are begging us to give them the workforce that they need. They want to hire the American worker. They want to make sure that local communities and States have the kind of economy that they need. I think it is important.

Mr. Speaker, it goes a little deeper. This is not just about one or two people and the decisions they are making. I have a real problem, and I do not want to change the channel here, but I have a real problem with the fact that it is so easy for the Republican majority to abuse not only the spirit of the rules in the House of Representatives but also when we start dealing with the Constitution of the United States.

We had a budget reconciliation vote that came up here, I do not know, maybe three or four times, not because the Members did not show up to vote, it is because the Members did not want to vote on budget reconciliation that cut student aid and that will bring about the kind of innovation that Mr. RYAN is talking about, that cut free and reduced lunch, that directed the Veterans Affairs Committee to make millions of dollars in cuts in veterans affairs over a period of years, that did a lot of other things, that gave giveaways to the oil industry. They did not want to vote on it.

I remember we were on this floor on the eve of I believe it was veterans'

weekend. They did not want to vote on it, leave here and march in a parade and someone may holler out, congressman, congresswoman, how can you march with the veterans here, waving a flag, talking about I am with you all the way; meanwhile, you voted with your colleagues on the Republican side that closed our clinic. They just could not do it.

So now we are in a situation when we talk about respect for the way we do business, the President signed the budget reconciliation bill that was not identical. Let me go back to Government 101 here. They have to be identical pieces of legislation between the House and Senate for the President of the United States to sign.

Mr. RYAN, you remember the old cartoon, I am just a bill, I am on Capitol Hill. It talked about going from committee to committee, and you pass the House and go to the Senate or you start in the Senate and go to the House, and then you go to the President of the United States. One bill, same language, identical, side by side.

You cannot have language in one bill that says one thing and have a budget that says something else. Not one line, not one word can be different. The President and the administration that we know, and we are going to get into this tomorrow night, and like I said, I challenge the majority side to try to go in the bathroom and look in the mirror and say, "I can go out there and say this is right." We are 110 percent right on this, just like we were right on the K Street Project. We are talking fact here.

The President signed a bill that many have said is unconstitutional. It is not an identical bill. All of us know it. The issue about secrecy and misleading the public is becoming an everyday occurrence here in Washington, DC.

I think it is fundamentally wrong for us to salute one flag, believe in the bedrock of a Constitution and to allow individuals that are in control now to say a couple of words are different and there is more money here than there, what is the big deal. I signed it, it is done, we are in control, and who is going to question us, Mr. Speaker. They say, who is going to call us before the committee and say, excuse me, who is going to send subpoenas to the White House and say, did you know these bills were not identical? Who is going to call in the leadership of the House and Senate and say, how could you do something when you knew they were not identical bills? Well, it is not a big deal because they are in charge.

Mr. Speaker, if the American people were to bring about the kind of paradigm shift that this country deserves in the next election, my goodness, it will take up a lot of time here in Congress to be able to fix what is broken.

Maybe the Republican majority may say we need to start working on a bipartisan basis and start working with the Democrats on some of these issues.

Maybe we can really look at Social Security and make sure that it is sound and solid for generations even beyond the 40 years it will be solvent, and maybe we need to look at health care and not this health savings plan because we already know that does not work. Let us look at some of the Democratic alternatives and let us have a conference report, let us have a bipartisan conference report that we actually invite Democrats to participate in.

Mr. Speaker, we have legislation right now that the first time that the ranking members, and I want to break this down so we all understand, the ranking members who are the lead Democrats on the committee, see for the first time a bound bill, this wide, this thick, coming to the floor and it is their first time seeing it. That is not because they decided to sit in their office and eat pecans, but because they were not told where negotiations were taking place.

There are a lot of rooms in this Capitol, and I think it is important that we spend a lot of time, not some time, but a lot of time letting the American people know that here on the Democratic side of the aisle we have history on our side in balancing the budget. We have history on our side in making sure that we have a very strong U.S. economy where everyone shares in it, everyone makes money. Small businesses are able to do what they have to do, and making sure that we have integrity in a government that people know when they pay their taxes that those dollars are going in the right place. We balanced the budget.

I challenge the Republican majority to say the same thing. Not that we cut it in half or took a quarter of it. That is not what we did. We balanced the budget with surpluses as far as the eye could see.

I challenge the Republican side to come with one proposal and say any time in the history of the Republic that they have done that, period dot. That is just the bottom line. History speaks to it, the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD speaks to it, and the Congressional Budget Office speaks to it.

It is not the Kendrick Meek Report or the Tim Ryan Report. We are not here to entertain the Congress. We are here to make sure that these individuals that are in control on the majority side understand that we mean serious business about saving this country not on behalf of Republicans or Democrats or Independents but on behalf of the American people.

Are we passionate? You are doggone right we are passionate. We are passionate for all of the right reasons. We are not here arguing on behalf of someone who said let us just talk about things are bad because we need to make up some kind of story because we want to be in control of the U.S. Congress. This is fact. This is fact.

I do not care if you have a club of hard-core individuals saying that I want to support corruption, cronyism

and incompetence. Only the recipients of corruption, cronyism and incompetence are the cheerleaders for that kind of activity.

Mr. RYAN, they would not even come up to the 1 percent of Americans that have benefited from the bad policies that the majority side has put forward. I can tell you right, and the record reflects and it reflects in the President's budget of who is on the side and who they are standing up for in that budget.

In that budget, they are cutting veterans affairs. In that budget, they are cutting student aid. In that budget, they are giving tax giveaways to the individuals that are on K Street, obviously that have access to this administration and to the majority.

So I would say this. The record speaks to what we are sharing with the Members. The record speaks to the fact that we on this side, without one Republican vote, Mr. Speaker, not one. One would think maybe two might have said I am going to vote to balance the budget. A big fat zero. My 8-year-old and my 11-year-old can understand what a zero is. Not one. For anyone to come to the floor and say the Democrats want such and such, let me tell you, we cannot do anything but raise the question and put pressure on the majority side to do the right thing.

We said there could be a 9/11 Commission. The Republicans did not want it. The American people joined in us.

We said there should be a national strategy on homeland security and we should have a department addressing the issues of homeland security. Republicans did not want it. The American people joined with us, and we have a Department of Homeland Security.

We said we need to come to Washington, DC, and deal with body armor on behalf of the troops in Iraq. The Republicans said they have their armor. Donald Rumsfeld came down from the Department of Defense and said we have a strategy, we have a plan. Oil is going to pay for the war. All of these things that we now know are incorrect. We said it, and then the Republican majority started responding to it.

I can tell you in this case, as it relates to fiscal responsibility, the record does not reflect a past history of this Republican majority doing the right thing and balancing the budget.

□ 2300

We didn't say that we were going to cut the budget in half. We said, we'll balance the budget. And we did. We have an innovation agenda, if given the opportunity, and we invite our Republican friends that are over there, that a few of them think the way we think, move with us in moving this agenda together. We are talking about all of the good stuff that the American people are asking for, Mr. RYAN. They are asking for creating an educated, skilled workforce in the areas of science, math, engineering and information technology. They are asking for an investment as it relates to Federal research and development initiatives in

promoting public-private partnerships. We are saying that we want every American to have access to affordable broadband. That is making sure that they have access to the Internet, making sure their children have access, seniors and every household can afford it. What is the deal about saying, some people can afford it, some people can't? We are a country. We are not a bunch of individuals. And we are saying that we will achieve energy independence in developing emerging technology and clean substantive alternatives to strengthen national security and protect our environment, not within 20 years, not within 50 years, not within 100 years. We are talking about 10 years, Mr. Speaker. It can happen.

We know together, Mr. RYAN, in America, we can do better. We are willing to partner with the American people like we have done before. But I can tell you right now, Mr. RYAN, this Republican majority, they didn't get it 10 years ago, they are not getting it now, and they won't get it tomorrow.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. As you were talking about, the Democrats have a history of balancing budgets in this Chamber. In 1993, without one Republican vote, the Democrats balanced the budget and it was signed into law by President Clinton, led to great surpluses, the greatest expansion in the history of the country and created over 20 million jobs.

Now, the Democrats have tried, while we have been down here, to try to get our friends on the Republican aisle to show some fiscal discipline, to show a little bit of fiscal restraint. And we have tried. There is a provision here called PAYGO, pay-as-you-go. If you spend money, you have got to pay for it. If you cut revenues, you have got to pay for it. If you increase spending in a certain program, you have got to pay for it. Pay-as-you-go.

Now, over the last few years, Democrats have tried to reinstate PAYGO which led to all these surpluses in the nineties, and then our friends on the Republican side got rid of this a few years back. But over the last few years, we have tried to put these PAYGO rules in. Let me give you three third-party validators, not TIM RYAN, not KENDRICK MEEK, this is in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. March 30, 2004. Republicans voted by a vote of 209-209, ties lose, to reject a motion offered by Representative MIKE THOMPSON, Democrat from California, to instruct the budget conferees to put the pay-as-you-go requirements in the 2006 budget resolution. That is 2004, vote number 97, if you would like to check it out, Mr. Speaker. Also, May 5, 2004, Republicans voted by a vote of 208-215 to reject a similar motion by Representative DENNIS MOORE, Democrat from Kansas. That is 2004, vote number 145. And then again, November 18, 2004, Republicans voted to block consideration of the Charlie Stenholm amendment to the debt limit increase bill which would have restored pay-as-you-go require-

ments. That is 2004, vote number 534, basically saying, we need to put a system in place to make sure that this Congress doesn't just spend money recklessly like they are doing now.

\$9 billion lost in Iraq.

\$16 billion to the energy companies, the oil industry in particular, the most profitable industry in the world right now.

Billions upon billions upon billions of dollars to the pharmaceutical industry in corporate welfare. And we are not balancing the budget. We are taking the money again and we are borrowing it. We are borrowing money we don't have and we are giving it to people who have a lot of money.

This is the interest payments that we are making in the red. This is the investments that we are making in education, homeland security and veterans.

Mr. MEEK, I know we are beginning to wrap up and work our way out here, but I just want to share this with the Speaker and the Members of Congress. What else could the government do if we weren't so far in debt and had to pay all this interest?

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I think that is important, Mr. RYAN.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. It is an important answer. What else could the government do with the interest the country pays every day on the publicly held debt? We could invest \$1 million a day, Mr. MEEK, in every single congressional district. Every district. So at the end of the year, you would have \$365 million to invest into your congressional district in South Florida. I know that you have a lot of needs down there, as do I in Ohio.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. \$1 million a day. Mr. Speaker, we need to let that sink in. \$1 million a day can be able to assist a small business in providing health care for their employees. \$1 million on the back end of that can prevent individuals from paying high copays, because that is what is taking the American people under, this whole health care issue.

\$1 million a day will be able to resolve some of the issues of overcrowding and the underfunding of No Child Left Behind in my district.

\$1 million a day, goodness gracious, maybe we will be able to prevent many young Americans from making youthful indiscretions so that they don't have to be on the taxpayers' dole and being incarcerated.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. And we talk about getting our children prepared to become engineers and scientists in part of our innovation agenda. Just what we pay every day on the debt could enroll almost 61,000 children in Head Start for an entire year. We are getting young kids who are at risk into the Head Start program which has shown that there is constant improvement and they fare much better than kids who don't get in.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. RYAN, I know you want to move on and you

have several other examples on that chart.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I want to talk about how the veterans could be helped.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. We don't want to hold the veterans off. But what I want to just say real quick, Mr. RYAN, \$1 million a day would be able to solve many issues in the gulf coast right now of individuals who are homeless. We are evicting individuals out of temporary housing at this point and making them homeless. Not people overseas, not folks in Iraq, people that pay taxes every day here in the United States. They are in Mississippi. They are in Alabama. They are definitely in Louisiana. They are in Texas. They are in places that are a part of this country. We are telling them that we can't do it.

We have individuals that come to the floor, Mr. RYAN, saying we have got to wean the American people off the Federal tax dollar. We need to wean the special interests and irresponsibility and the corruption tax that we are putting on the backs of Americans. We are putting a heavy corruption tax on the backs of Americans. I just want to say this out loud because I want to make sure, Mr. Speaker, that the Members know. I want them to see this ball coming and it is not a softball. It is a baseball. We are going to talk about this corruption tax and we are going to talk about it and we are going to talk about it and we are going to point out to the Members what it is costing the American people. We are going to point out to the Members what it is costing their constituents. And if we want to continue the kind of corruption tax and if we want to continue to have this air and environment of corruption, cronyism and incompetence here in Washington, D.C. and it is costing the very people that woke up one given Tuesday morning very early to vote for representation, then you go home and explain to them how you stood idly by and allowed this kind of activity to continue.

So, Mr. RYAN, I just wanted to say that very quickly, because we are talking about spending the taxpayers' dollars in a responsible way. I think it is important for us to talk about the present. So I just want to put the Members on notice right now. I want to make sure the Republican majority can get in a huddle and start talking about how we are going to deflect this issue on the corruption tax, because I am going to tell you right now, this culture of corruption that is ongoing right now in Washington, D.C., and I am not talking about individuals, I am talking about the corruption tax based on the policies that have passed out of this institution. When it is okay, Mr. RYAN, for the President to sign a bill that is not identical, that deals with the budget of these United States and then someone says, excuse me, Mr. President, you know you just signed a bill that is unconstitutional? And the message comes back, well, it's okay, it's

gone now, there's nothing we can do about it, there is something wrong. I think that is a crack in the face to democracy, Mr. RYAN.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I agree 100 percent with you, my friend.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Please go to the veterans.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I wanted to finish up. I want to just say thank you to you for coming down here every night and making these points in such a passionate way.

The debt and the deficit I think really as you are talking about are part of this corruption tax. And I know I wanted to get into this, but these are the numbers here. This is what we owe. This is what the national debt is. \$8.2 trillion. You want to let a number sink in? Try to wrap your brain around that sucker. \$8.2 trillion. Every Member of Congress, every child, every adult, every senior citizen, your share of that debt is \$27,500. So take your credit card debt, take your house, take your car, add it all up and throw another \$27,500 on it. Take your college loans and throw another \$27,500 on it because of the fiscal irresponsibility of this Congress and this administration.

This number has gone up dramatically over the past 5 years. The Republican majority has raised the debt limit, allowing the Treasury Department to borrow more money, five times. And they are not done. Five times, Mr. MEEK. And they are not done. Many high-powered Members of Congress got this letter from Secretary of Treasury John Snow saying that the United States needs the Republican Congress to raise the debt ceiling one more time.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. As soon as possible. That is what the letter says.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. As soon as possible. This particular letter was sent December 29 to Senator MCCONNELL.

Dear Senator MCCONNELL:

The administration now projects that the statutory debt limit, currently \$8.184 trillion, will be reached in mid February of 2006.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. That is right now.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. And at that time unless the debt limit is raised or the Treasury Department takes authorized extraordinary actions, we will be unable to continue to finance government operations.

Now, that is where we are. Because of that number, my friends, because of that number and that number, the government will shut down unless we go out and borrow more money. That is irresponsible. I have got a friend back home. I won't give his last name. His first name is Dave. He is a banker. He consistently addresses this issue as we talk, how the country cannot keep going on and on and on borrowing this kind of money without putting the burden on the next generation.

For those people who don't think this matters, your share of your tax revenues are going to pay off the interest

on this debt. And those payments are going to the Chinese government and the OPEC countries, Mr. MEEK. That is a shame. That is a dirty shame.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. RYAN, we could do better. We could do better if we were in the majority. But we are not. I can tell you that I miss our friend, DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, who is usually here who puts it best. We are trying, but she knows how to hit the nail right on the head.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. A lot of air comes out of the balloon.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. When she speaks because I think it is important for people to understand that this thing is bigger than the two of us and that it is bigger than the 30-some-things. And that you are addressing not only Americans in Ohio but Americans throughout the country. \$27,500 that is owed by every American, not just Democrats, not just Republicans, not just Independents, not just Green Party, Mr. Speaker, that is every American. So we look forward to Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ coming back and sharing with the American people what they need to know.

Mr. RYAN, I know that we are going to come in for a landing here in about 3 to 4 minutes, and you know that we have a meeting to talk about some of the information that we just received today that is going on in this House of Representatives, Mr. Speaker. There are not enough hours in the day.

□ 2315

Literally, there are not enough hours in the day; and, thanks to the majority, we are having to spend these hours in a late night, Mr. Speaker, trying to turn the ship and save this country on a fiscal standpoint.

Do not get me wrong. We are not talking about individual decisions. We know that people make bad decisions. Individuals make bad decisions, and we can survive an individual bad decision. But when we have an entire culture of corruption and the corruption tax that is going on here in the United States as I speak now, Mr. Speaker, we have got to burn the midnight oil. We have got to drink an extra cup of coffee in the morning. We have got to go to the gym and take a hot shower so we can make this thing happen. And we are going to continue to meet and caucus, do the things that we need to do.

I want to commend our staff to do the same thing. I want to commend you, Mr. RYAN, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, and the rest of the 30-some-things for doing what we do. Because I am going to tell you something. It is extra-extraordinary. We have got to be here in the morning just like everyone else to get out and do what we need to do on behalf of our constituents. We have got to go to more meetings possibly, Mr. Speaker, than the majority has to go to because we are in the business of making sure that we represent not only our constituents but the American people in this time.

There will be books written about this time right now, about the irresponsibility that took place in this country's history, the highest deficit in the history of the Republic, more corruption and investigations and people of interest right now in the history of this country. This is not, oh, well, in 10 years or more people of interest or investigations in 20 years. In the history of this country. So this calls for special attention.

So I call upon the Members of this Congress to look in the mirror real quick. Do you want to talk about lobbying reform? Well, I can tell you this right now, and this just comes from the book of common sense: I am pretty sure the lobbyists did not call up Capitol Hill and say, hey, listen, we want you to start a K Street project because we want to be forced to hire ex-staffers from the Republican Party. That is just what we want. Or we want to make sure that we have to give X amount of campaign contributions to a particular party. They did not call that up.

So what I am going to say right now, Mr. Speaker, is I think that we need to make sure that we do the right thing.

Mr. RYAN, I just want to say, sir, that I appreciate your candor. I appreciate your courage. It would be something very, very wrong for us to do if we came to the floor and talked about fiction. This is fact. So I look forward to any Member that wants to talk about balancing the budget, Mr. Speaker. I am ready, set, go. My chin strap is buckled, and my mouthpiece is in. I want to talk about it. I am saying let's get down, low man wins. I am ready to do what we have to do. If you want to talk about it, I can tell you right now on this side of the aisle, we have done it. And until the Republican majority can say that we have done it, then there is really no discussion.

Mr. RYAN held up the letter from Secretary Snow. I held it up an hour ago. The man is saying for the sixth time, Mr. Speaker, that we have to raise the debt limit. It does not sound like things are in order. It does not sound like there is fiscal responsibility. It does not sound like there are individuals that are being responsible with taxpayer dollars.

And the bottom line, Mr. RYAN, is the Republican majority is in charge. Not Democrats. Republicans are in charge, for the sixth time in a row, raising the debt limit. For the sixth time in a row, irresponsibility.

So I look forward, Mr. RYAN, to our meeting after we leave the floor. I look forward to hitting the alarm clock in the morning, taking my kids to school, and coming to the Capitol. I look forward to our cup of coffee in the morning in the cafeteria downstairs talking about what is the game plan for today.

So thank you, sir, for your service to the country; and I want to thank Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ in her absence, too.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Thank you.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. If you would give the Web site out.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. The Web site is www.housedemocrats.gov/30something. We ask the Members to send us something if they have any comments about what we have been talking about.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. With that, Mr. Speaker, we thank the Democratic leader for allowing us to be here.

OMISSION FROM THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD OF TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2006 AT PAGE H270

SENATE BILLS REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 2166. An act to direct the Election Assistance Commission to make grants to States to restore and replace election administration supplies, materials, records, equipment, and technology which were damaged, destroyed, or dislocated as a result of Hurricane Katrina or Hurricane Rita; to the Committee on House Administration.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. HINCHEY (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week on account of illness.

Mr. OSBORNE (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today and the balance of the week on account of official business in the district.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. EMANUEL, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. DELAURO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. WYNN, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. SOLIS, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. HERSETH, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. RUSH, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. STUPAK, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. POE) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. BURGESS, for 5 minutes, today and February 16.

Mr. GINGREY, for 5 minutes, today.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 1777. An act to provide relief for the victims of Hurricane Katrina; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 20 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, February 16, 2006, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

6189. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Commerce, transmitting a report of a violation of the Antideficiency Act by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1517(b); to the Committee on Appropriations.

6190. A letter from the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Vice Admiral David L. Brewer III, United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of vice admiral on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

6191. A letter from the Acting President and Chairman, Export-Import Bank of the United States, transmitting a report on transactions involving U.S. exports to the Kingdom of the Netherlands pursuant to Section 2(b)(3) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945, as amended; to the Committee on Financial Services.

6192. A letter from the Director, Child Nutrition Division, FNS, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Child and Adult Care Food Program: Age Limits for Children Receiving Meals in Emergency Shelters (RIN: 0584-AD56) received January 17, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

6193. A letter from the Acting Director, OSRV, MSHA, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's final rule — Training Standards for Shaft and Slope Construction Workers at Underground Mines and Surface Areas of Underground Mines (RIN: 1219-AB35) received January 24, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

6194. A letter from the Acting Director, OSRV, MSHA, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's final rule — Low-voltage Medium-Voltage Diesel-Powered Electrical Generators (RIN: 1219-AA98) received January 24, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

6195. A letter from the Acting Director, OSHA Directorate of Standards and Guidance, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's final rule — Roll-Over Protective Structures [Docket No. S-270-A] (RIN: 1218-AC15) received January 9, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

6196. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Employee Benefits Security Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's final rule — Annual Funding No-

tice for Multiemployer Defined Benefit Pension Plans (RIN: 1210-AB00) received January 11, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

6197. A letter from the Deputy Executive Director, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Valuation of Benefits; Mortality Assumptions (RIN: 1212-AA55) received January 9, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

6198. A letter from the Deputy Executive Director, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Disclosure to Participants; Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans — received January 9, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

6199. A letter from the Deputy Executive Director, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Allocation of Assets in Single Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Valuing and Paying Benefits — received January 9, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

6200. A letter from the Deputy Executive Director, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Allocation of Assets in Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Valuing and Paying Benefits — February 8, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

6201. A letter from the Deputy Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting the annual report on Military Assistance, Military Exports, and Military Imports for Fiscal Year 2005, as required by Section 655 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (FAA), as enacted 10 February 1996, by Section 1324 of Pub. L. 104-106, and 21 July 1996, by Section 148 of Pub. L. 104-164; to the Committee on International Relations.

6202. A letter from the Associate Director, PP&I, OFAC, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Economic Sanctions Enforcement Procedures for Banking Institutions — January 11, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on International Relations.

6203. A letter from the Associate Director, PP&I, OFAC, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Partial Withdrawal of Proposed Rule — January 11, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on International Relations.

6204. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's final rule — Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption; Inventory Adoption Act of 2000; Accreditation of Agencies; Approval of Persons (RIN: 1400-AA-88) received January 30, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on International Relations.

6205. A letter from the Acting Secretary to the Council, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of Council Resolution 16-443 the, "Transfer of Jurisdiction Over a Portion of U.S. Reservation 475, Fort Mahan Park Approval Resolution of 2006," pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Government Reform.

6206. A letter from the General Counsel, General Accounting Office, transmitting the FY 2005 report of the instances in which a federal agency did not fully implement a recommendation made by the GAO in connection with a bid protest decided the prior fiscal year, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3554(e)(2); to the Committee on Government Reform.